

IC 31-33-18

Chapter 18. Disclosure of Reports; Confidentiality Requirements

IC 31-33-18-1

Confidentiality; exceptions

Sec. 1. (a) Except as provided in section 1.5 of this chapter, the following are confidential:

- (1) Reports made under this article (or IC 31-6-11 before its repeal).
- (2) Any other information obtained, reports written, or photographs taken concerning the reports in the possession of:
 - (A) the division of family resources;
 - (B) the county office of family and children; or
 - (C) the department.

(b) Except as provided in section 1.5 of this chapter, all records held by:

- (1) the division of family resources;
- (2) a county office of family and children;
- (3) the department;
- (4) a local child fatality review team established under IC 12-13-15; or
- (5) the statewide child fatality review committee established under IC 12-13-15.1-6;

regarding the death of a child determined to be a result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect are confidential and may not be disclosed.
As added by P.L.1-1997, SEC.16. Amended by P.L.70-2004, SEC.14; P.L.234-2005, SEC.153.

IC 31-33-18-1.5

Certain records held by governmental entities not confidential if redacted; procedure for redacting records

Sec. 1.5. (a) This section applies to records held by:

- (1) the division of family resources;
- (2) a county office of family and children;
- (3) the department;
- (4) a local child fatality review team established under IC 12-13-15; or
- (5) the statewide child fatality review committee established under IC 12-13-15.1-6;

regarding a child whose death or near fatality may have been the result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

(b) For purposes of subsection (a), a child's death or near fatality may have been the result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect if:

- (1) an entity described in subsection (a) determines that the child's death or near fatality is the result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect; or
- (2) a prosecuting attorney files:
 - (A) an indictment or information; or
 - (B) a complaint alleging the commission of a delinquent act; that, if proven, would cause a reasonable person to believe that

the child's death or near fatality may have been the result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

Upon the request of any person, or upon its own motion, the court exercising juvenile jurisdiction in the county in which the child's death or near fatality occurred shall determine whether the allegations contained in the indictment, information, or complaint described in subdivision (2), if proven, would cause a reasonable person to believe that the child's death or near fatality may have been the result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

(c) As used in this section:

(1) "identifying information" means information that identifies an individual, including an individual's:

(A) name, address, date of birth, occupation, place of employment, and telephone number;

(B) employer identification number, mother's maiden name, Social Security number, or any identification number issued by a governmental entity;

(C) unique biometric data, including the individual's fingerprint, voice print, or retina or iris image;

(D) unique electronic identification number, address, or routing code;

(E) telecommunication identifying information; or

(F) telecommunication access device, including a card, a plate, a code, an account number, a personal identification number, an electronic serial number, a mobile identification number, or another telecommunications service or device or means of account access; and

(2) "near fatality" has the meaning set forth in 42 U.S.C. 5106a.

(d) Unless information in a record is otherwise confidential under state or federal law, a record described in subsection (a) that has been redacted in accordance with this section is not confidential and may be disclosed to any person who requests the record. The person requesting the record may be required to pay the reasonable expenses of copying the record.

(e) When a person requests a record described in subsection (a), the entity having control of the record shall immediately transmit a copy of the record to the court exercising juvenile jurisdiction in the county in which the death or near fatality of the child occurred. However, if the court requests that the entity having control of a record transmit the original record, the entity shall transmit the original record.

(f) Upon receipt of the record described in subsection (a), the court shall, within thirty (30) days, redact the record to exclude:

(1) identifying information described in subsection (c)(1)(B) through (c)(1)(F) of a person; and

(2) all identifying information of a child less than eighteen (18) years of age.

(g) The court shall disclose the record redacted in accordance with subsection (f) to any person who requests the record, if the person has paid:

(1) to the entity having control of the record, the reasonable expenses of copying under IC 5-14-3-8; and

(2) to the court, the reasonable expenses of copying the record.

(h) The court's determination under subsection (f) that certain identifying information or other information is not relevant to establishing the facts and circumstances leading to the death or near fatality of a child is not admissible in a criminal proceeding or civil action.

As added by P.L.70-2004, SEC.15. Amended by P.L.234-2005, SEC.154.

IC 31-33-18-2

Disclosure of unredacted material to certain persons

Sec. 2. The reports and other material described in section 1(a) of this chapter and the unredacted reports and other material described in section 1(b) of this chapter shall be made available only to the following:

(1) Persons authorized by this article.

(2) A legally mandated public or private child protective agency investigating a report of child abuse or neglect or treating a child or family that is the subject of a report or record.

(3) A police or other law enforcement agency, prosecuting attorney, or coroner in the case of the death of a child who is investigating a report of a child who may be a victim of child abuse or neglect.

(4) A physician who has before the physician a child whom the physician reasonably suspects may be a victim of child abuse or neglect.

(5) An individual legally authorized to place a child in protective custody if:

(A) the individual has before the individual a child whom the individual reasonably suspects may be a victim of abuse or neglect; and

(B) the individual requires the information in the report or record to determine whether to place the child in protective custody.

(6) An agency having the legal responsibility or authorization to care for, treat, or supervise a child who is the subject of a report or record or a parent, guardian, custodian, or other person who is responsible for the child's welfare.

(7) An individual named in the report or record who is alleged to be abused or neglected or, if the individual named in the report is a child or is otherwise incompetent, the individual's guardian ad litem or the individual's court appointed special advocate, or both.

(8) Each parent, guardian, custodian, or other person responsible for the welfare of a child named in a report or record and an attorney of the person described under this subdivision, with protection for the identity of reporters and other appropriate individuals.

(9) A court, for redaction of the record in accordance with section 1.5 of this chapter, or upon the court's finding that access to the records may be necessary for determination of an issue before the court. However, except for disclosure of a redacted record in accordance with section 1.5 of this chapter, access is limited to in camera inspection unless the court determines that public disclosure of the information contained in the records is necessary for the resolution of an issue then pending before the court.

(10) A grand jury upon the grand jury's determination that access to the records is necessary in the conduct of the grand jury's official business.

(11) An appropriate state or local official responsible for child protection services or legislation carrying out the official's official functions.

(12) A foster care review board established by a juvenile court under IC 31-34-21-9 (or IC 31-6-4-19 before its repeal) upon the court's determination that access to the records is necessary to enable the foster care review board to carry out the board's purpose under IC 31-34-21.

(13) The community child protection team appointed under IC 31-33-3 (or IC 31-6-11-14 before its repeal), upon request, to enable the team to carry out the team's purpose under IC 31-33-3.

(14) A person about whom a report has been made, with protection for the identity of:

(A) any person reporting known or suspected child abuse or neglect; and

(B) any other person if the person or agency making the information available finds that disclosure of the information would be likely to endanger the life or safety of the person.

(15) An employee of the division of family resources, a caseworker, or a juvenile probation officer conducting a criminal history check under IC 12-14-25.5-3, IC 31-34, or IC 31-37 to determine the appropriateness of an out-of-home placement for a:

(A) child at imminent risk of placement;

(B) child in need of services; or

(C) delinquent child.

The results of a criminal history check conducted under this subdivision must be disclosed to a court determining the placement of a child described in clauses (A) through (C).

(16) A local child fatality review team established under IC 12-13-15-6.

(17) The statewide child fatality review committee established by IC 12-13-15.1-6.

(18) The department.

As added by P.L.1-1997, SEC.16. Amended by P.L.70-2004, SEC.16; P.L.234-2005, SEC.155.

IC 31-33-18-3

Disclosure to qualified researchers

Sec. 3. (a) Section 2 of this chapter does not prevent the county office of family and children or the department from disclosing to a qualified individual engaged in a good faith research project either:

(1) information of a general nature, including the incidents of reported child abuse or neglect or other statistical or social data used in connection with studies, reports, or surveys, and information related to their function and activities; or

(2) information relating to case histories of child abuse or neglect if:

(A) the information disclosed does not identify or reasonably tend to identify the persons involved; and

(B) the information is not a subject of pending litigation.

(b) To implement this section, the department shall adopt under IC 4-22-2 rules to govern the dissemination of information to qualifying researchers.

As added by P.L.1-1997, SEC.16. Amended by P.L.234-2005, SEC.156.

IC 31-33-18-4

Notice to parent, guardian, or custodian of availability of reports, information, and juvenile court records; release form; copying costs

Sec. 4. (a) Whenever a child abuse or neglect investigation is conducted under this article, the department shall give verbal and written notice to each parent, guardian, or custodian of the child that:

(1) the reports and information described under section 1 of this chapter relating to the child abuse or neglect investigation; and

(2) if the child abuse or neglect allegations are pursued in juvenile court, the juvenile court's records described under IC 31-39;

are available upon the request of the parent, guardian, or custodian except as prohibited by federal law.

(b) A parent, guardian, or custodian requesting information under this section may be required to sign a written release form that delineates the information that is requested before the information is made available. However, no other prerequisites for obtaining the information may be placed on the parent, guardian, or custodian except for reasonable copying costs.

As added by P.L.1-1997, SEC.16. Amended by P.L.234-2005, SEC.157.